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Dear Mayor Sam Katz,

It has been brought to my attention that the City of Winnipeg is contemplating the approval of a water park hotel project to be constructed on the City owned parking lot directly west of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. While an indoor water park may be an important amenity for Winnipeg, I have some serious reservations about locating the park on this fantastic once in a lifetime site directly adjacent to the Museum.

The Forks, with its rich historic past and civic amenities, is fast becoming the hub of the region's premier cultural district. The district is home not only to the Museum for Human Rights and the Baseball Park, but to the Children's Museum, Manitoba Theatre for Young People and the Esplanade Riel. The inclusion of a water park risks trivializing these institutions. The danger is that the district will begin sliding from a cultural district to a "theme park" district and the cultural institutions will lose their footing and audience.

Another big issue could be the obstruction of the view between the museum and downtown. When we designed the museum we gave careful consideration to this special site and its urban context, opening to the Forks to the south and the pedestrian Esplanade Riel and taking advantage of a view corridor to downtown and St. Boniface. Views to and from downtown, the walkway to downtown and Union Station are currently an unobstructed testament to Canada's leadership in Human Rights. The proposed hotel would create a high barrier right in the line of sight.

Finally, you must realize that the proposed site is a once in many lifetimes dream site for an important cultural institution. It seems to me that this site is destined for a higher civic purpose than a water park. The site, with its unmatched proximities to the Forks, the Museum, and the Ballpark, should be the home for an institution that is focal to the City and that will benefit the life of the Forks in exchange for being benefited by these key adjacencies. Don't let this opportunity pass too easily and please don't award any entity the rights to build on this site without some spirited public debate.

Sincerely,



Antoine Predock, FAIA